

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 274645

NODIS
FOR BRZEZINSKI

FOLLOWING REPEAT PARIS 33484 ACTION STATE NOV 16.

QUOTE S E C R E T PARIS 33484

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, US
SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST CONSULTATIONS

REF: (A) STATE 264736, (B) PARIS 32427,
(C) STATE 267096, (D) PARIS 33106

1. ACTING ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER
GUIRINGAUD, QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR MIDDLE EAST
AFFAIRS, HENRI SERVANT, GAVE US THE EVENING OF
NOVEMBER 15 THE GOF RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S
REQUESTS TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE PRESIDENT
(REFS B AND D) THAT PRESIDENT GISCARD SEND A MESSAGE
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TO SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASAD GIVING HIS SUPPORT TO OUR
PROPOSALS FOR RECONVENING GENEVA WITHOUT DELAY.
READING FROM NOTES, SERVANT SAID THAT THE GOF HAD
VERY MUCH IN MIND OUR REQUEST FOR AN APPROACH TO
PRESIDENT ASAD. IN CONSEQUENCE PRIME MINISTER BARRE
WILL TAKE UP THIS SUBJECT WITH PRESIDENT ASAD WHEN HE
TRAVELS TO SYRIA AT THE END OF NEXT WEEK. THE PRIME

MINISTER WILL ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE PRESIDENT ASAD THAT HE SHOULD AGREE TO GO TO A RENEWED GENEVA CONFERENCE WITHOUT INSISTING ON PRECONDITIONS WHICH WOULD DELAY THE RECONVENING OF THE CONFERENCE OR MAKE MORE DIFFICULT THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE ONCE IT HAS CONVENED.

2. STILL READING FROM HIS NOTES, SERVANT SAID THAT THE FRENCH INTENTION TO URGE ASAD TO GO TO GENEVA WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS IS FIRM "BUT THE FOREIGN MINISTER ASKS HIMSELF WHETHER CONDITIONS MIGHT HAVE CHANGED FOLLOWING THE RECENT PUBLIC EXCHANGES BETWEEN PRESIDENT SADAT AND PRIME MINISTER BEGIN".

3. SERVANT SAID THAT THE GOF CONSIDERS PRESIDENT SADAT'S OFFER TO GO TO JERUSALEM TO BE A VERY IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT. THE FRENCH UNDERSTAND THAT SADAT HAD TALKED ON THE PHONE WITH ASAD PRIOR TO HIS SPEECH TO THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY IN WHICH HE MADE THE OFFER, AND THE GOF THEREFORE BELIEVES IT MIGHT HAVE HAD THE TACIT APPROVAL OF ASAD. THE FRENCH ALSO NOTE THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS NOT ATTACKED AT THE TUNIS FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING EXCEPT BY IRAQ -- WHICH WAS TO BE EXPECTED. THE FRENCH SEE THE SADAT INITIATIVE AS A CAREFULLY CALCULATED MOVE. SADAT, AS OTHER ARAB LEADERS, HAS NO ROOM FOR FLEXIBILITY
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ON THE QUESTIONS OF WITHDRAWAL/FRONTIERS AND PALESTINIAN RIGHTS. BY OFFERING TO GO TO JERUSALEM HE HAS DEMONSTRATED IN A SPECTACULAR WAY THAT EGYPT AT LEAST IS PREPARED TO GO A LONG WAY ON THE "NATURE OF PEACE" QUESTION.

4. COMMENT: FROM SERVANT'S COMMENTS ON THE SADAT INITIATIVE -- HE HAD JUST COME FROM A MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER -- WE SUSPECT THAT THE GOF DECISION NOT TO SEND A MESSAGE TO ASAD BEFORE THE BARRE VISIT TO SYRIA WAS INFLUENCED BY SADAT'S SPEECH TO THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY AND THE DESIRE TO MOVE CAUTIOUSLY ON ANY INITIATIVE UNTIL THEY HAD HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO EVALUATE ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

5. WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO ENSURE THAT BARRE AND GUIRINGAUD ARE BRIEFED AS THOROUGHLY AS POSSIBLE ON LATEST MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS PRIOR TO BARRE'S DEPARTURE FOR SYRIA NOVEMBER 24. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY FILL-IN GOF MAY HAVE BEEN RECEIVING FROM US ON SADAT-BEGIN PAS-DE-DEUX. HOW FORCEFUL AND POSITIVE BARRE WILL BE IN WORKING ON ASAD CAN BE INFLUENCED

BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH FRENCH FEEL WE HAVE TAKEN
HIM INTO OUR CONFIDENCE. ON EVE OF DEPARTURE PHONE
CALL BY THE SECRETARY TO GUIRINGAUD WOULD BE EFFECTIVE.
HARTMAN UNQUOTE VANCE

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